

REMARKS

Claims 16-25 and 27-32 were previously pending in the application. By the Amendment, Claims 16 and 20 are currently amended, Claim 17 is canceled without prejudice, and Claims 18, 19, 21-25 and 27-32 remain unchanged.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's granting an interview with the Applicants' representative on October 22, 2008. There, the discussion included cited reference US Patent No. 7107779 to Avenwedde (Avenwedde '779). Also discussed was the cancellation of claim 20 and its incorporation into independent claim 16. The Examiner agreed that upon receipt of Applicants' response, a further search would be conducted to determine allowability.

In accordance with the interview, the subject matter of claim 20 has been substantially incorporated into independent claim 16. Since specific structural elements not necessary for patentability of amended claim 16 remain in claim 20, claim 20 has not been canceled, while intermediate claim 17 has been canceled.

In addition, Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that Claims 20-23 include allowable subject matter. In that regard, allowable original Claim 20 has been rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim. Therefore, independent Claim 16 is in condition for allowance. Dependent Claims 18-25 and 27-32 depend from independent Claim 16 and are allowable for the same and other reasons.

The claims stand rejected under the cited prior art of record. Specifically, Claims 16-18, 24, 25, 27-30 and 32 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent No. 6059420 to Rogers (Rogers '420) in view of Avenwedde '779 and US Patent Publication No. 2003/0042852 to Chen (Chen '852). Claim 19 was rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over

Rogers '420, Avenwedde '779 and Chen '852 and further in view of US Patent No. 6478445 to Lange (Lange '445). Claims 31 and 32 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Rogers '420, Avenwedde '779 and Chen '852 and further in view of US Patent Publication No. 2003/0122455 to Caldwell (Caldwell '455).

Independent Claim 16 recites a refrigerating appliance including a housing defining an interior space having a plurality of internal walls. An internal lighting system is disposed within the housing for illuminating at least a portion of the interior space. The internal lighting system includes at least one organic light-emitting diode (OLED) for illuminating at least a portion of the interior space, with the OLED including a substrate having applied thereto an electrode, at least one layer of organic material and a counter-electrode. The substrate is formed as a transparent plate. The OLED is supported in the housing for forming a luminous surface from at least one of the internal walls. Further, the OLED is integrated into at least one of the internal walls and a built-in component located in the interior space, said OLED being integrated into at least one of the internal walls and a surface of the built-in component.

Rogers '420 is directed to a refrigerator door that is selectively transparent due to lighting in the door. With reference to Figures 1 and 4, the door panel 11 includes a transparent panel 22 and a so-called two-way mirror panel 24 juxtaposed therewith. An internal lighting unit 12 is also disposed within the door structure (Col. 2, ll. 38-46). When the lighting unit 12 is off, the door appears mirrored as seen in Figure 2. When the lighting unit 12 is illuminated, the mirror is rendered transparent, as seen in Figure 3, revealing the contents of the refrigerator. (Col. 3, ll. 13-18).

Avenwedde '779 is directed to a refrigerator using LEDs as internal lighting. As seen in Figure 2, LED's 24 are mounted internally in the refrigerator

for illumination thereof (Col. 4, ll. 17-26). Avenwedde '779 mentions that OLEDs may be substituted for the LEDs 24, but gives no structural details regarding their construction and use (Col. 4, ll. 35-41).

Chen '852 is directed to a specific manufacturing method for OLED encapsulation (see Abstract). Chen '852 notes in paragraph [0004] that OLEDs are used in full-color flat panel displays or monitors, and accordingly Chen '852 does not provide any indication that the OLED construction recited therein could be applied to internal refrigerator lighting.

During the interview, the deficiencies of the references, particularly Avenwedde '779 with respect to disclosure of the structural nature of OLED internal refrigerator lighting as claimed in claims 16, 17 and 20 were discussed. The cited references fail to disclose that the internal wall structure could have a portion thereof formed from OLED lighting material. More specifically, the prior references fail to teach, disclose or suggest at least one OLED which is integrated in or mounted on at least one of the internal walls of the refrigerating appliance or a wall of a built-in component forming a luminous surface of the respective internal wall or the built-in component. Therefore, it was determined that such combined references as cited in the present Official Action could not be combined under 35 USC § 103(a) to render the present invention as claimed in amended claims 16 and 230 obvious.

For these and other reasons Rogers '420, Avenwedde '779 and Chen '852 either alone or in any combination, do not teach or suggest the subject matter defined by independent Claim 16. Therefore, Claim 16 is allowable. Claims 18-25 and 27-32 depend from Claim 16 and are allowable for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

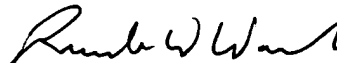
For these and other reasons, Rogers '420, Avenwedde '779, Chen '852 and Lange '445 either alone or in any combination, do not teach or suggest the subject matter defined by dependent Claim 19. Therefore, Claim 19 is allowable. Claim 19 depends from Claim 16 and is allowable for the same reasons and also because additional patentable subject matter is recited.

For these and other reasons, Rogers '420, Avenwedde '779, Chen '852 and Caldwell '455 either alone or in any combination, do not teach or suggest the subject matter defined by dependent Claims 31 and 32. Therefore, Claims 31 and 32 are allowable. Claims 31 and 32 depend from Claim 16 and are allowable for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, entry of the present Amendment and allowance of Claims 16, 18-25, and 27-32 are respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned. If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

Respectfully submitted,



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